COUNCIL OF ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES
CONSEIL DES UNIVERSITÉS DE L'ONTARIO

RECORD

Vol. 5 No. 2 September 2002

Budget reinforces government commitment to growing numbers of students

Full funding will be provided for additional university-bound students

Ontario's Budget 2002 has committed significant resources for full support for Ontario universities, reinforcing the government's intent to ensure that there will be a place for every qualified and motivated student seeking admission to one of Ontario's universities.

Key among the new budget measures is the provision of full average cost funding for enrolment growth. While last year's budget committed to full funding through multi-year operating grant increases, directly proportional to projected enrolment growth, student numbers have been climbing higher than forecast, with the result that actual and projected enrolments are exceeding the estimates upon which Budget 2001 based its funding figures. In Budget 2002, the government has addressed the shortfall by increasing its operating grant commitment based on its revised enrolment projections. The province will provide colleges and universities with an additional $75 million, bringing last year's $293 million commitment to $368 million by 2003-2004.

"Well over 100,000 high school students will graduate between 2002 and 2003, combined," says Mordechai Rozanski, Chair of the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) and President of the University of Guelph. "We are very pleased that the government has provided sufficient funding to ensure that these students will be accommodated in Ontario universities.

Both the universities and the government are committed to ensuring that high school graduates from both cohorts — the five year Ontario Academic Credits (OAC) group, and students completing the new four-year curriculum — will be treated in a fair and equitable manner, says Dr. Rozanski. "Our guiding principle is that, regardless of whether students are graduating from the former OAC or the new four year program, or when they entered high school, students' chances of gaining admission to university will be the same."

Other significant budget measures include:

Another round of SuperBuild for postsecondary institutions

The government announced that as a new round of postsecondary SuperBuild proposals, it will be seeking cost effective and creative financing proposals to increase the number of student spaces in the areas where they are needed. This latest initiative follows on the success of the initial SuperBuild program launched in February 2000, which represented the largest capital investment in Ontario's colleges and universities in more than 30 years. To date, SuperBuild has allocated $891 million to help colleges and universities construct new academic buildings and upgrade existing teaching facilities to accommodate the growing numbers of students.

Increase in Ontario Student Opportunity Trust Fund

In its budget, the government also noted that lack of financial resources should not limit a student's opportunity to gain a postsecondary education. The province will consult with students, colleges, and universities on designing a second phase of the Ontario Student Opportunity Trust Fund so that it can assist 400,000 students in attending colleges and universities over the next decade.

Important new investments in research

The latest budget continues to build on the government's strong record of investment in university research. Budget 2002 includes an additional $350 million over five years to expand the Ontario Research and Development Challenge Fund, and a $300 million enhancement to the Ontario Innovation Trust. Beyond these welcome initiatives, a further $7 million will be added annually to the Ontario Research Performance Fund to help cover research overhead costs. These measures, combined with other significant investments in research in recent years, will greatly improve the ability of universities to sustain a vibrant research enterprise.

In commenting on the latest budget measures, COU President Ian Clark has commended Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities Diane Cunningham and her officials, who have worked with the universities for three years to plan for the dramatic enrolment growth and its many implications. Among those implications, the issue of maintaining quality while serving vastly larger numbers of students remains paramount.

"The numbers show that an investment that supports high quality teaching, learning, and research in our universities is an investment in the economic well being of Ontario," stresses Dr. Clark. "Statistics Canada consistently reports that university graduates enjoy the highest employment rates and average personal incomes of graduates from all postsecondary sectors. The university community shares the benefits of quality learning and research with the whole province. A recent report by Enterprise Canada Research has found that Ontario universities and their graduates provide $3.2 billion in taxes and other revenue to the province every year and stimulate over $10 billion in economic activity annually. Our universities also attract key investment capital to Ontario through their R&D initiatives. The level of excellence that generates this kind of productivity and innovation must be maintained for future generations of students.

"We look forward to continuing our productive relationship with the Ministry as we work through our multi-year agenda to ensure that students have access to excellence," says Dr. Clark.

Update on secondary school reform

The Government of Ontario and COU are continuing to monitor the implementation of the new secondary school curriculum, giving particular attention to the grades awarded in the new courses.

So far, based on available evidence, the findings consistently show that the distribution of high level grades (65% to 100%) is essentially the same across comparable courses in the old and new curricula. It is anticipated that this pattern will be maintained.

Based on preliminary data from the Ministry of Education on Grade 11 marks, the government reports an overall variance of less than 1% in average marks between advanced courses in the old curriculum and university and university/college preparation courses in the new curriculum. A comparison of Grade 10 marks from the previous year shows a similar picture.

Government, university plan for double cohort on track

Bringing welcome news to university-bound students and their parents, June figures from the Ontario Universities Application Centre (OUAC) indicate that acceptances for Ontario secondary school students applying direct to university for admission in fall 2002 have increased by 16.3% — matching a 16.3% increase in the number of secondary school applicants. These figures show that, despite a sharp escalation in demand for postsecondary education, the ratio of applications to acceptances is holding steady with previous years.

"This demonstrates that our plan for double cohort students is on track," said Dianne Cunningham, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, at a press conference held on June 24, 2002. "The numbers show that the proportion of Ontario high school students that were accepted into full-time university programs this fall is the same as in the fall of 2001."

It is clear that our universities are responsive to the increased demand resulting from the double cohort fast trackers," said Monkchai Rozanski, Chair of Council and President of the University of Guelph, who joined the Minister at the press conference. "The objective of accommodating all qualified and motivated students is being met."

In the spring of 2002, enrolment projections for the double cohort years were revised upwards. In its latest budget, the government has introduced several measures to bridge the numbers gap.

To support increased enrolment at colleges and universities this fall, the government will provide $2.7 billion in operating grants in 2002-2003 and has committed to increasing operating grants for postsecondary institutions by $368 million by 2003-2004. The operating grant increases, first announced in Budget 2001, were topped up this year to reflect higher than anticipated student demand. A portion of the grants will continue to be awarded based on an institution's performance in such key areas as graduate employment rates.

The government's plan for the double cohort, as announced in this year's budget, also includes introducing a new round of SuperBuild funding "to increase the number of student spaces in the areas where they are needed."

The universities — joint partners in the planning process — have indicated to the provincial government the number of additional students they are in a position to accept, and each institution is taking a share of additional students. Some institutions have decided to grow significantly. Others have agreed to grow to help ensure that every qualified and motivated student in Ontario has access to the province's universities. Each university's enrolment growth plan is the basis for a formal Enrolment Target Agreement with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. In these agreements, each university is committing to a specific number of secondary school graduates that it will be prepared to accept in 2003. The total of these university commitments will provide the total number of spaces required to meet the Ministry's revised enrolment projections.

"All these measures will help our students get the education and training they need to reach their full potential, and represent an investment in the future economic well-being of the province," said Minister Cunningham.

OUAC's acceptance figures for early August indicate that the acceptance rate is holding steady year over year; acceptances are up 16.1% and the application volume is up 16.4% at this later stage in the application cycle, with more acceptances expected to arrive for the month. Another indication of the universities' responsiveness to the increased demand this year is the fact that many openings remaining in university programs were still listed on OUAC's web-based Information Referral Service in August.

For more information on Budget 2002, please see story on page 3.

Fourth annual survey confirms: University grads enjoy high employment rates

For the fourth consecutive year the results of the Ontario University Graduate Survey show that university graduates do extremely well at getting jobs. This year's survey, which looked at those individuals who graduated from Ontario universities in 1999, found that the overall employment rate was 95.8% six months after graduation and 96.6% after two years out. Virtually all academic disciplines put up a strong showing, with many boasting a full 100% employment rate at both the six month and two year intervals.

Of the 42,833 graduates who were surveyed, 14,363 responded (33.5%) either online or by returning a hard-copy form to the Ontario Universities Application Centre (OUAC). The survey was conducted by OUAC on behalf of the Council of Ontario Universities under a contract with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Individual universities have posted detailed information on the employment rates of their own graduates, institutionally and by discipline, on their web sites. The fall issue of *INFO* magazine features a summary of the employment rates to help students assess their postsecondary options. *INFO* magazine will be distributed to Ontario secondary schools in September (300,000 copies) and is also available on OUAC's web site at www.ouac.on.ca.

The survey results closely match Statistics Canada findings, which consistently show university graduates enjoying the highest employment rates and average personal incomes of graduates from all postsecondary education sectors.

Employment Rates and Average Salaries for University Graduates: Four-Year Comparison

	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002
Employment Rates for University Graduates				
■ 2 Years	96.7%	96.4%	97.2%	96.6%
■ 6 Months	90.8%	93.1%	94.6%	95.8%
Youth Employment Rate[1] (Ontario)				
■ 15 to 24 Years Old	87.4%	88.3%	88.3%	87.6%
Average Annual Salary for University Graduates				
■ 2 Years	$37,400	$38,500	$41,100	$41,700
■ 6 Months	$30,600	$31,900	$33,700	$34,200

[1] The rising youth employment rate in 2001-2002 is a reflection of labour market conditions in October 2001, the month in which the survey was conducted, and not a reflection of the employment status of graduates. According to Statistics Canada, "Data on student employment can be volatile around the time of school start-up in September. Many students who are looking for work during the summer months will find employment in the weeks following the end of classes in April or May. Others will not begin looking for work until September, when they return to school. Therefore, the unemployment rate for students is usually highest in September and October, and declines throughout the school year."

[2] Average Salaries are rounded to the nearest $100. All salaries are reported in current dollars. 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2001 salaries have been adjusted to 2002 dollars using the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for Canada.

Provincial ministers tour the Application Centre

*On tour at the Ontario Universities' Application Centre (OUAC): **Janet Ecker**, Minister of Finance, and **Brenda Elliott**, Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services, watch as **Christine Hickson**, Manager of Undergraduate Processing, demonstrates OUAC's online application system. **Gregory Marcotte**, Executive Director of OUAC, and **Mordechai Rozanski**, Chair of COU and President of the University of Guelph, look on.*

On June 21, 2002, Janet Ecker, Minister of Finance, and Brenda Elliott, Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services, toured the new headquarters of the Ontario Universities' Application Centre (OUAC), which officially opened its doors in May 2001. The two guests were given a demonstration of OUAC's web-based application system and information sites. OUAC Executive Director Gregory Marcotte reported on the current university admission application cycle as well as the extensive preparations for the double cohort application cycle, which begins this fall for 2003 admissions.

The Ministers congratulated OUAC on its outstanding success and thanked the staff for being prepared to meet the challenges of the upcoming cycle, which a 50% increase in secondary school applications is anticipated. Secondary school students in the system are expected to submit over a half-million university and/or program selections.

Monkchai Rozanski, Chair of Council and President of the University of Guelph, was also on hand to express his appreciation for the financial support announced in the provincial budget delivered on June 11, 2002, and to underscore the multi-year funding agenda of Ontario's university sector.

Survey underway on factors that influence students' choice of university

COU partnered with the Acumen Research Group this past spring to administer the 2002 University Applicant Survey (UAS), a useful planning tool that not only provides information on the profile of applicants, but also on key factors that influence students' choice of university. A random sample of 20,000 first year, direct entry students to Ontario universities received the survey in March. Completed surveys were returned by 7,200 applicants, yielding the high response rate of 36%.

This year's survey results have shown the following:

- Fifty percent of applicants decide to attend university between the ages of 10 and 14. This finding is consistent with last year's survey. Female applicants, applicants with higher grade averages, and applicants from higher income households make their decisions at a younger age.
- The top five factors influencing university selection are the institution's academic reputation, safe environment, graduates' ability to get high-quality jobs, graduates' ability to get into top professional and/or graduate schools, and emphasis on teaching.
- The top three concerns regarding the decision to attend university are finding employment after graduation, ready access to professors, and career development.
- The top three double cohort related concerns are difficulty getting into required classes, declining access to professors, and declining access to academic counselling.
- Interest in a first degree has increased from a low of 4% of respondents in 1996 to 6.3% this year.
- Interest in medical degrees and MBAs have remained fairly consistent over the years, at about 11% and 10% of applicants respectively. Approximately 20% of applicants intend to complete a bachelor's degree, 18% a master's degree, and 11% a doctoral degree. Interest in a teaching degree, which peaked at 8.6% in 2000, declined slightly this year to 7.4%.

Some institutions have been using survey results since 1992, when the UAS was first administered, to aid in the recruitment process and help determine the best ways to reach prospective applicants. The findings also help universities in their preparation for the greatest surge in applicant demand since the 1960s — a surge that has already begun, as evidenced by the 16.3% increase in secondary school applicants and 8.4% increase in non-secondary school applicants for fall 2002.

A summary of the report on the survey results is expected to be released this fall.

CEO of TD Bank Financial Group to speak at OPAS seminar

Charles Baillie, Chair and CEO of the TD Bank Financial Group, will be the featured speaker at the 2002 Visionary Seminar on November 25, 2002. A highly respected business leader, Mr. Baillie will share his insights on the outlook for his industry and the Canadian economy.

This year's seminar is the sixth in a series of Visionary Seminars presented by the Office for Partnerships for Advanced Skills (OPAS) and its university partners. The seminars enable universities across the province to build new relationships with local business leaders and showcase their capabilities in addressing the human and intellectual capital needs of Canadian companies. Each seminar spotlights a major Canadian industry, shares insight into future directions, and highlights the skills graduates will need to secure employment in that sector.

The November seminar will be presented live at Queen's University to an in-house audience of faculty, students, and local business leaders, and to a national audience at university campuses across Canada via satellite. The seminar will also be captured by a simultaneous web cast, which will be viewable at the OPAS web site (www.opas-partnerships.com).

Past Visionary Seminars have featured Mike Lazaridis, President and CEO, Research In Motion (RIM); John Cleghorn, then Chair and CEO of Royal Bank of Canada; John Tory, then President of Bell Ontario; Joan Mountz, then Vice Chair and CEO of Sears; and Ted Rogers, CEO of Rogers Communications.

myfuture.ca overwhelmingly popular with students bound for Ontario universities

Last year, Ontario universities launched an online resource to help prospective students make informed decisions about their choice of university and program of studies. Since its official launch in November 2001, *myfuture.ca* has received more than 46,000 hits, with the largest surge in activity occurring this February.

OPAS launches awards for teaching with technology

Two awards that recognize innovation and excellence in teaching with technology have been established by the Office for Partnerships for Advanced Skills (OPAS). The first award will recognize a program, course, or module designed for undergraduate or graduate level university students. The second award will acknowledge a learning product designed specifically for people in the workplace. The awards, which are valued at $7,500 each, will be presented at a special awards luncheon in Toronto on October 18, 2002.

OPAS is a partnership of Ontario universities and major Canadian companies committed to advancing industry-university joint ventures.

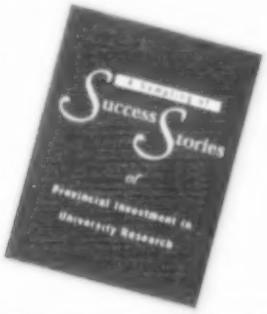
Guiding principles reinforce commitment to equal opportunity for all qualified and motivated students

To give guidance to students and to provide reassurance, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and COU have agreed on the following information and guidelines. This information has been sent to school guidance counsellors and made available to the public as an aid to students in planning their postsecondary careers.

- The universities of Ontario and the provincial government have been working together for the past six years to plan for the double cohort. The universities participated in the validation of the OSS curriculum and are confident that students graduating from the new program are as well prepared as their OAC counterparts for university studies.
- The universities and the government are committed to the principle that, regardless of their program of studies, or when they entered high school, students' chances of gaining admission to university will be the same.
- The government remains committed to ensuring that there will be enough spaces for all willing and qualified applicants. Budget 2002 provided an additional $70 million in operating funds, bringing last year's multi-year commitment to $288 million by 2003-2004 to finance approximately 42,000 new student places. In addition, the government and postsecondary institutions have committed over $1.8 billion in capital investment to increase the physical capacity to handle the increased number of students.
- The government and the universities will continue to monitor the implementation of the new secondary school curriculum. It is important to note that grades are not always the sole determinant of admission to an institution or to a particular program, and universities will exercise judgment in the admission process to ensure that all students are treated fairly.

University research success stories: Follow-up publication in the works

The start of the year saw the publication of *A Sampling of Success Stories of Provincial Investment in University Research* — a compilation of stories that illustrate the range and richness of university research supported by the Ontario government. On the heels of the well-received publication, the Ontario Council on University Research, in association with COU, is producing a follow-up book that will provide more brief accounts of research and innovation across the disciplines in Ontario universities.



Federal support for university research on the agenda at OCUR annual meeting

Attending the annual meeting of the Ontario Council on University Research (OCUR) in Ottawa on April 11, 2002 were Marc Renaud, President of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council; Tom Brzustowski, President of the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council; David Strangway, President of the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI); and Carmen Charette, Vice-President of CFI. The OCUR meeting provided an invaluable opportunity to discuss the changing environment of federal support for university research, the situation and priorities of each funding council, the past performance of Ontario universities in their funding competitions, and prospects for the future.

Business forum features TD Bank Financial Group's chief economist

At the 2002 Business Leaders' Forum (l.t.): ***Norm Shulman****, Executive Director of OPAS;* ***Paul Davenport****, Past Chair of Council and President of the University of Western Ontario;* ***Don Drummond****, Senior Vice-President and Chief Economist for TD Bank Financial Group;* ***Terry Mosey****, President of Bell Ontario and OPAS board member; and* ***Mordechai Rozanski****, Chair of COU and President of the University of Guelph.*

On April 19, 2002, the Office for Partnerships for Advanced Skills (OPAS) hosted the 2002 Business Leaders' Forum, the fourth in a series of business forums designed to facilitate the exchange of information and views on key issues affecting both industry and the university community. This year's featured speaker was Don Drummond, Senior Vice-President and Chief Economist for the TD Bank Financial Group.

Mr. Drummond shared his views on the Canadian economy and the need for further investment in post-secondary education by government and the private sector to keep Canada competitive. He pointed out that between 1995 and 1998, per-student expenditures rose in most competing jurisdictions but fell by 6% in Canada. He further noted that real spending per student has declined by 30% in Canada since 1980, while increasing by 28% in the United States during the same period.

Following Mr. Drummond's remarks, speakers Terry Mosey and Paul Davenport presented industry and university views, respectively, on issues raised in the address. Mr. Mosey is President of Bell Ontario and an OPAS board member. Dr. Davenport is Past Chair of Council and President of the University of Western Ontario.

Nearly 100 invited guests from industry, the universities, and government were in attendance.

SPRING/SUMMER 2002 COUNCIL UPDATES

Carleton President Becomes New Vice Chair

Effective July 1, 2002, Richard Van Loon, President of Carleton University, assumed the role of Vice-Chair of Council for a term of one year. Paul Davenport, President of the University of Western Ontario, completed his one-year term as Past Chair of Council.

Richard Van Loon

Nipissing Hosts Year-End Meeting of Council

On May 31, 2002, Nipissing University President David Marshall welcomed members of Council to North Bay, the site of the last meeting of Council for the academic year. Each year, one of Council's five regularly scheduled meetings is held at a member institution.

At the year-end meeting, Council bid farewell to five academic colleagues:

- Dr. Laurie Garrett (Lakehead University)
- Dr. Daniel Woolf (McMaster University)
- Prof. Michael Miller (Ryerson University)
- Dr. David Bentley (University of Western Ontario)
- Dr. Maurice Elliott (York University)

Laurie Garrett

Daniel Woolf

Michael Miller

David Bentley

Maurice Elliott

Mordechai Rozanski, Chair of Council and President of the University of Guelph, extended best wishes to all and his sincere gratitude for the departing members' outstanding service.

COU's VP of Policy and Analysis Completes His Term — New VP Appointed

Ken Snowdon, who has presided as Vice-President of Policy and Analysis at COU for the past three and a half years, completed his secondment from Queen's University at the end of June 2002. Ken has since embarked on a nine-month research leave.

Ken Snowdon

He is succeeded in the position by Jamie Mackay, whose appointment became effective on August 1, 2002. Jamie brings more than 25 years of experience with the Ontario Public Service to the post. He has served with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities as director of both the Student Support Branch and the Universities Branch. Most recently, he played a key role as a member of the Working Group on University Capacity and in the development of the SuperBuild program. Jamie has been actively involved with government-postsecondary education relations, policy development, and program and grants administration since he first joined the then University Relations Branch in 1981. Earlier, he also held positions in the ministries of Community and Social Services and Health. He holds an honours bachelor's degree in political science and history from the University of Waterloo and a master's degree in public administration from Queen's University.

Jamie Mackay

Board Chairs Meet with Minister Cunningham

On May 15, 2002, COU President Ian Clark and chairs of university governing boards met with Dianne Cunningham, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. Discussions focused on a broad range of issues including the throne speech pledge that "the government will build on previous commitments and provide further resources to postsecondary institutions to meet higher than expected student demand." This meeting is the second with Minister Cunningham; on April 18, 2000, the Minister met with board chairs to discuss a number of items and to strengthen the working relations between the Ministry and the universities.

Improving the Quality of Seniors' Health Care Subject of Forum

The Ontario Interdisciplinary Council for Aging and Health (OICAH) hosted a forum this spring, entitled Harmonizing Our Activities, to examine ways in which various activities, strategies, and government initiatives can be maximized to improve the quality of care for Ontario's seniors. Key individuals involved in service, education, research, and policy participated in the May 23 forum — among them, service providers and officials from several ministries (including Health and Long-Term Care; Citizenship, Culture and Recreation; and Training, Colleges and Universities) and representatives from Ontario universities.

RECORD

COUNCIL OF ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES
CONSEIL DES UNIVERSITÉS DE L'ONTARIO

Council of Ontario Universities
Suite 1100
180 Dundas Street West
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5G 1Z8
Tel. (416) 979-2165 ext. 236
Fax (416) 979-8635
http://www.cou.on.ca